



CASE STUDY

Curtin University Uses Data Insights to Propel a 2030 Global Strategic Plan

Curtin University partnered with Hanover Research to begin envisioning a new institutional strategic plan that puts students first.



THE INSTITUTION

Curtin University

INSTITUTION TYPE

Public undergraduate and graduate university

LOCATION

Perth, Australia

THE CHALLENGE

Develop an innovative approach for a strategic plan that focuses on student experience

HANOVER SOLUTION

Strategic Advising, Benchmarking and Best Practices

Curtin University, a top-ranked global university based in Perth, Australia, is known for its research excellence, educational innovation, and strong industry partnerships. In 2021, Curtin partnered with Hanover Research to begin envisioning a new institutional strategic plan to guide its Australian campuses, four international campuses, 3,000 employees, and more than 50,000 students through the year 2030.

THE CHALLENGE: FUTURE PROOF THE INSTITUTION WITH AN ASPIRATIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Curtin’s leaders recognized a need to radically shift their focus to the student experience. As they embarked on a new institutional strategic planning process, they knew they needed to build upon the university’s legacy of innovation and rethink their approach to traditional strategic planning. Vice-Chancellor Professor Harlene Hayne wanted to include an external perspective to help the university’s governing Council think more broadly about student engagement, community, and sustainability to build a plan with greater impact.

As a global institution, it was also vital for the institution to consider its campuses across Australia and the Indian Ocean Rim, all of which were affected heavily by pandemic travel restrictions and safety precautions. Curtin needed a thought leadership partner that could help its leaders think creatively about how to remain relevant and competitive in a time of great uncertainty.

“We engaged Hanover Research to not only provide market insights but also to present and facilitate a strategic conversation with our University Council. It was this session that helped our council understand the importance of student engagement and experience as a core strategy in our new plan. Ultimately, I believe it became the turning point for Curtin to refocus in this direction.”

Dr. Marco Schultheis,
Chief Strategy and Marketing Officer



50,000+

The number of students enrolled at Curtin University

THE SOLUTION: LEVERAGE DATA INSIGHTS TO REFINE A STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Hanover held multiple virtual meetings with Professor Hayne and other university leaders to learn about their challenges and goals, and to share best practices and emerging trends that could inform the university's thinking about the plan.

To generate buy-in for a new approach to strategic planning among Council members, the research team at Hanover developed a custom presentation based on its research focused on producing global citizens through student engagement. The presentation included key research and data insights on:

- Student engagement indicators
- Best practices in fostering student involvement and belonging
- Student, faculty, and staff perceptions of campus-based learning and online engagement concerns

The presentation generated a thoughtful conversation about how to break away from strategic planning norms to embrace a more forward-looking vision of what was possible for the university in the next decade.



80+

The number of Curtin's global partnerships



7

The number of Curtin campuses around the world

“Hanover offered a global perspective, which challenged our existing thinking and helped us refocus our strategy. Curtin may not have taken the strategic steps necessary to differentiate in a highly competitive market without this partnership.”

Dr. Marco Schultheis,
Chief Strategy and Marketing Officer

THE OUTCOME : A STRATEGIC VISION FOR 2030 THAT REFLECTS CURTIN'S VALUES

With a new sense of direction, affirmed by market trends and best practices in student success, university leaders were able to engage faculty, staff, students, and other stakeholders in a process to develop a new guiding document known as the “Curtin 2030 Strategic Plan.” Unveiled in 2022, the plan's vision statement is “working in partnership, we will make a difference for people and our planet.” The plan's strategic framework is based on three pillars:

- **People:** Focusing on student experience, staff engagement, and community belonging
- **Planet:** Emphasizing UN Sustainable Development Goals, sustainable operations, and global impact
- **Partnership:** Highlighting First Nations voices and perspectives, strong relationships, and community outcomes

Hanover's market research and strategic advisory services helped Curtin challenge traditional notions of strategic planning and refine its unique vision for student involvement, environmental stewardship, and community connections to help solve global challenges. As the university begins to progress on its new goals and objectives, its leaders continue their partnership with Hanover to ensure a future-minded approach to success.

CURTIN UNIVERSITY'S 2030 STRATEGIC PLAN FRAMEWORK



Step-by-Step Guide to
Comprehensive Academic Portfolio Review.

